

# GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden

## ACTIVITY REPORT 2025

Connection  
and Climate  
Action in  
Corduff



Comhairle Contae  
Fhine Gall  
Fingal County  
Council

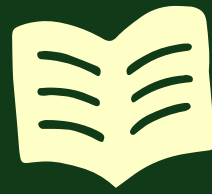


OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA  
BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH  
**TU DUBLIN**  
TECHNOLOGICAL  
UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Background To The Project</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>A Garden Transformed: 2022 - 2026</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Key Achievements in 2025</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Project Aims</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Community &amp; School Engagement</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Public Workshops &amp; Events</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Media Coverage</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Challenges Identified in 2025</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Programme Deliverables: 2025 Performance</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Project Oversight</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>30</b>

# Executive Summary



The GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden is a place where people cultivate vegetables, and grow confidence, friendships and hope.

Open to everyone, it brings together children, local residents, students, adults with disabilities, schools, community groups and corporate volunteers in a shared space of learning, care and creativity.

At the heart of the garden is partnership. GAP Ireland, TU Dublin and Fingal County Council work hand in hand to operate the garden, while schools, community organisations and local businesses bring energy, curiosity and commitment that make the space thrive.

Together, they have created a vibrant, welcoming hub where people feel valued, connected and inspired to take action for nature and climate.

The garden reflects a simple but powerful ethos: climate action and wellbeing flourish when people come together, sharing knowledge and stories. For the people of Dublin 15, it is a rare space to connect, be part of a caring community, and discover that even small, everyday actions can have a big impact.

In 2025, the garden continued to grow as a place of learning, connection and hope, showing that when people come together, they can care for nature and neighbourhoods.

# Background To The Project

2025 marked a transformative year for the GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden. What began as a modest pilot is now one of the most vibrant and inclusive community garden programmes in Dublin, welcoming hundreds of participants from every corner of Dublin 15 and beyond.

The project's core ethos is simple but powerful: **create a shared space where people of all backgrounds and abilities can connect with nature, learn practical sustainability skills and build meaningful relationships.**

In a time when communities everywhere are seeking ways to reconnect, safeguard mental wellbeing and take climate action, the garden provides an accessible, hands-on model of what a resilient, caring community can look like.



**The GLAS @ TU Dublin garden is a place where people grow confidence, friendships, belonging and pride.**

Visitors describe it as a “breathing space” in the middle of the city: a place to slow down, feel welcome and be part of something hopeful and constructive. The garden brings together schoolchildren, adults living with disability, local residents, corporate teams and TU Dublin students. This mix of people, who come to the garden to share tools, stories and harvests, is what makes the GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden truly special.

## The programme embodies three core principles:

### 1. Inclusion



Everyone is welcome, regardless of ability, language, background or experience. The garden is intentionally designed as a physically and socially accessible space where people can participate fully, whether they attend with a support organisation, come independently, or volunteer as part of a corporate group.

### 2. Education Through Doing



In the GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden, volunteers learn about sustainability and get the opportunity to experience it firsthand. From growing vegetables and restoring soil health to composting and protecting biodiversity, the garden is a living classroom where climate action becomes practical and achievable.

### 3. Community Wellbeing & Connection



Regular visitors describe the garden as one of the few places where they feel both useful and relaxed. The programme provides gentle structure, meaningful tasks and a friendly, supportive environment that improves mental health, reduces isolation and strengthens social bonds.

Because of this ethos, demand for the garden continues to grow faster than capacity allows. In 2025, more than 2,450 people volunteered in the garden and the garden now operates at full capacity every week.



**The community garden's success underscores the ongoing need for places like this: spaces where climate action, community wellbeing and education come together; where people feel welcome and valued; and where small actions contribute to a transformation of the community.**

The success of the GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden is made possible through a strong partnership model: Fingal County Council provides vital funding and strategic guidance, while TU Dublin supports the project as an active partner, offering campus facilities, student engagement and educational expertise. Additional support from sponsors including Toast, AstraZeneca and Energia Group as well as funding through the Irish Environmental Network, allows the garden to expand its reach, fund transport for local schools and maintain high-quality facilities and programming.



# A Garden Transformed: 2022 - 2026

When the agreement was reached, in late 2022, to start the GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden, it was little more than a bare half-acre of underused campus land.

From the outset, GAP Ireland, TU Dublin and Fingal County Council shared a vision: to create a space where people could connect with nature, learn sustainability skills, and build a stronger, more inclusive community.

Over the past three years, that vision has become reality. Volunteers and partner organisations transformed the site with fruit trees, vegetables, herbs, pollinator-friendly flowers, and raised beds, turning once empty soil into a thriving, biodiverse environment. Accessible paths, compost bays and seating areas were added, making the garden welcoming for children, adults with disabilities, local residents, students, and corporate volunteers alike.



By 2024, the garden had already become a hub of activity. School visits, community workshops and volunteer sessions brought people together in shared learning and discovery. Visitors described the garden as a place to slow down, feel welcome, and be part of something hopeful.

The growth continued in 2025, with over 2,400 volunteers, more than 200 events, and the creation of a biodiversity pond and all-weather spaces. The garden now demonstrates in practice how small, consistent actions can restore soil, support pollinators, and foster social connection.

From bare earth to a flourishing community hub, the GLAS @ TU Dublin garden embodies a simple truth: when people come together, care for nature and share knowledge, both the land and the community thrive. Its evolution over these years stands as living proof that inclusive, hands-on climate action can transform spaces and the lives of the people who use them



# A Timeline of a Unique Space

2022

## Laying the groundwork

- Site identified on TU Dublin Blanchardstown campus.
- Garden vision co-created by GAP Ireland, TU Dublin and Fingal County Council
- Initial clearance of land and planning of garden layout.



2023

## Early growth and community engagement

- First seeds and plants sown, including vegetables, herbs and pollinator-friendly flowers.
- May: Garden officially opened to community volunteers and local schools.
- Accessible paths and raised beds constructed.
- Regular volunteer sessions, workshops, and school visits began.
- Early biodiversity initiatives introduced, including insect-friendly planting areas.



2024

## Establishing the garden as a learning hub

- Expansion of fruit trees, herbs and vegetable beds.
- First anniversary celebrations held, highlighting community impact.
- Increased participation from school groups, community organisations, local residents and corporate volunteers.
- Outdoor classroom activities established for hands-on environmental education.



2025

## Transformation into a vibrant community space

- Community advisory committee created.
- Over 2,400 volunteers engaged throughout the year.
- 213 events delivered, including workshops, school sessions, and public volunteering days.
- Creation of biodiversity pond and all-weather space.
- Garden gains recognition through multiple local and national media features.
- Partnerships with sponsors.



2026

## Consolidation and future growth

- Garden operating at full capacity every week.
- Focus on deepening engagement with existing participants, enhancing biodiversity and climate action initiatives.
- Planning for further infrastructure to support inclusivity, environmental learning, and hands-on climate action.
- Continuing to serve as a living blueprint for inclusive, urban community gardening.



# Before & After

## Main Area



2023



2025

## Pond



2022



2024

## Patio



2022



2024

# Key Achievements in 2025



**2,113 Visitors**

Up from 1,927 in 2024



**20-50 Regular  
Weekly  
Volunteers**

With a WhatsApp  
community of 59 active  
participants



**5 Schools Visiting  
On 37 Occasions**



**Biodiversity Pond  
Created**



**6 Thematic Public  
Workshops  
Organised**



**213 Events**

Up from 144 in 2024



**18 Community  
Organisations  
Engaged**



**11 Corporate  
Volunteer  
Groups**

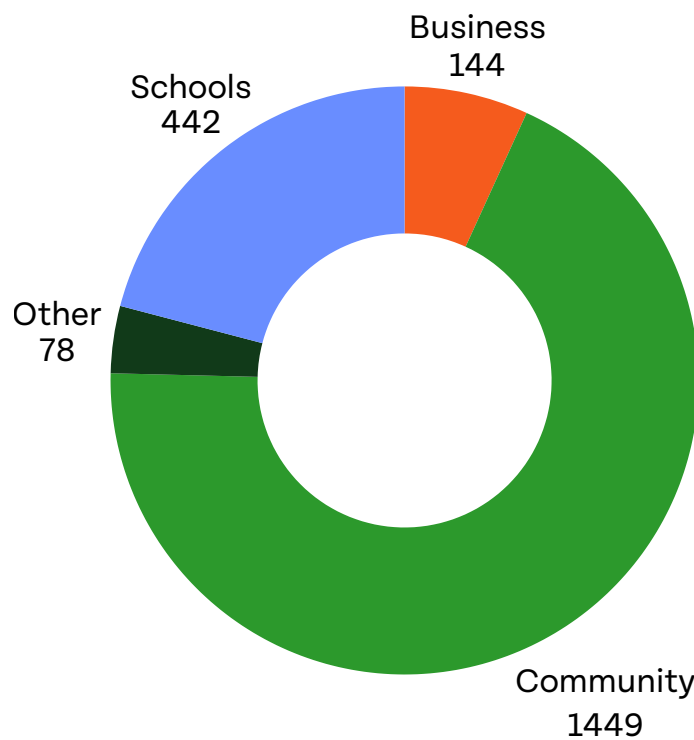


**All-weather  
Space Created**

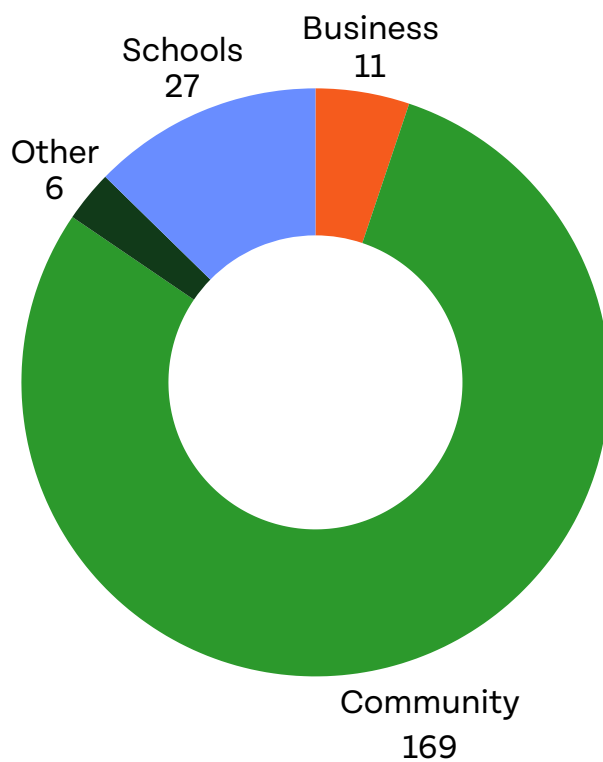


**9 features in  
National & Local  
Media**

# GLAS @ TU - 2,113 Visitors in 2025



# GLAS @ TU - 213 Events in 2025



# Project Aims

The overall aim of the GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden is to build stronger, healthier and more sustainable communities in the Blanchardstown-Tyrrelstown area by providing an accessible, inclusive and nature-based space where people can learn, connect and thrive together.

At its heart, the project is guided by a simple but powerful understanding: when people engage directly with nature and with each other, they build the confidence, skills and relationships that strengthen communities and support long-term environmental action.

## **A space where everyone belongs**



The garden is intentionally designed as a welcoming, low-threshold environment, open to people of all ages, abilities, cultures and experiences. It reflects GAP's long-standing commitment to social inclusion and environmental justice: ensuring that meaningful climate action and access to green space are not privileges, but rights shared across all communities, including those facing disadvantage.

By working alongside one another in a calm, supportive setting, participants build trust, reduce isolation and experience the wellbeing benefits of spending time outdoors.

## Learning by doing: A living classroom for sustainability



The garden operates on an experiential learning model, where practical tasks such as sowing, mulching, composting, planting and harvesting become opportunities to build environmental literacy. Through these hands-on activities, participants gain a deeper understanding of soil health, biodiversity, circular resource use and regenerative food systems.

This approach is deeply rooted in GAP's wider mission and the sustainability values of TU Dublin: when people learn through action, they internalise positive ecological behaviours that last a lifetime.

## Climate action grounded in community



Rather than teaching climate action as an abstract concept, the garden demonstrates it through everyday practice. Participants witness first-hand how small actions can restore soil, support pollinators, reduce waste and contribute to a more resilient local environment. These practical experiences empower individuals and groups who may feel excluded from climate conversations, showing that they, too, can play an active role in shaping a healthier, greener future.

## Supporting health, wellbeing and social connection



As highlighted in multiple studies and echoed in the programme's own feedback, social horticulture improves mental health, lowers stress, increases confidence and provides meaningful routine. These benefits are particularly valuable to participants managing disability, mental health challenges or social isolation.

The garden's ethos reflects a holistic understanding of sustainability: a community flourishes when people feel connected, valued and supported.

## Building a model for inclusive urban regeneration



Inspired by the success of GAP's Ballymun garden, GLAS @ TU Dublin serves as a blueprint for how educational institutions, local authorities and community organisations can work together to regenerate urban spaces in ways that are socially inclusive, environmentally restorative and locally led.

The long-term vision is for the site to continue developing as a local centre of:

- Environmental learning;
- Community wellbeing;
- Social inclusion;
- Practical climate action;
- Volunteerism and civic engagement;
- Partnership between academia and community.

Through these interconnected aims, the project contributes to a wider transformation: supporting the emergence of resilient, environmentally active, interconnected communities across Dublin 15.

The project aligns with Fingal's Corduff Place Standards initiative, as it offers a community-based example of how local green spaces can support the social and environmental priorities identified through the Place Standard Tool. In this context, the GLAS garden was part of the Place Standard Tool (PST) walking tour, which saw over 50 local residents visit the garden, to view and discuss the space within the context of their own neighbourhood.

# Community & School Engagement

## Community Groups

Eighteen community organisations participated in activities this year, including:

- Avista
- Gheel Autism Services
- the Central Remedial Clinic
- Praxis Care
- Multiple CRC centres across Dublin 15.

Activities ranged from planting and composting to harvesting and habitat creation.

Community participation is central to the purpose of the garden. The project is designed to provide a supportive, accessible outdoor space where people can take part in meaningful, low-pressure activity together. For many participants, especially those attending through support services, the garden offers structure, routine and opportunities for social connection that are not always available elsewhere. Their involvement ensures the space remains responsive to local needs and grounded in the realities of the communities it aims to serve.

The regular presence of community groups on campus also helps make TU Dublin feel more familiar and approachable, strengthening links between the university and the surrounding neighbourhoods.



With the garden now operating at full capacity, GAP strategically prioritised deeper, more consistent engagement with existing partners. This ensured high-quality experiences while managing growing demand.

- The Mulhuddart Men's Shed also contributed to the development of the garden by producing a range of items for the site, including raised beds, a wishing well, bird houses and a mini free library. Their involvement provided practical support and strengthened local community links.



- The garden also worked closely with the Blakestown Drive Community Group and their partners on the installation of a biodiversity pond. This partnership emerged through TU Dublin Horticulture, which connected the garden with the Stepping Stone Ponds initiative. The pond increased habitat diversity on the site, expanded opportunities for environmental education and enabled greater engagement with visitors on topics such as water, freshwater ecology and biodiversity as part of climate action.

# Schools



Five schools visited the garden on 37 occasions between February and June:

- Rath Dara Community School: 10 visits, hands-on learning in planting, composting, mulching and habitat development;
- Ladyswell National School: 12 visits, sowing and planting, wildflower meadow creation, garlic/broad beans, bug hunts and seedling care;
- Brian Boroimhe Gaelscoil: Broad bean and pea planting and an introductory food-growing talk;
- Coolmine School: Garden tour and brassica planting;
- English/Italian Language School: Created a new raised rhubarb bed and prepared the wildflower area.



Feedback from participating teachers and students remained overwhelmingly positive, with children engaging eagerly in hands-on learning and nature-based exploration.

School involvement is a core element of the garden’s educational mission. The sessions give students direct experience of growing food, understanding biodiversity and learning practical sustainability skills in a way that complements classroom teaching. For many children the garden provides a rare opportunity to explore nature locally. This early engagement helps build long-term environmental awareness and strengthens connections between schools and the wider Dublin 15 community. Their regular visits also help demystify the university environment, making TU Dublin feel more accessible and welcoming to young people from the surrounding areas.

The ability to provide transport for local schoolchildren, particularly from areas with limited public transit, was generously supported by AstraZeneca, ensuring equitable access to the garden for all participants.

**"When I'm at the garden, I feel calm. I see natcher [nature], I hear birds. I love gardening with Lee. He teaches us us how to plant."**

- Jack, 4th class, Ladyswell NS

**"Wen I'm at the garden I like to plant some garlic whit Lee, because he helps. And I feel happy when I go to the garden, and I like the pon[d]."**

- Anamaria, 6B, Ladyswell NS

**"When I am at the garden I will help to plant vegetables. When I am in the garden I feel happy and great. I see a lot of rabbits and a frogs in the water. I love gardning with Lee, because it is fun."**

- Rebeca, 4th class, Ladyswell NS



when I am at the garden I will help to plant vegetables. when I am in the garden I feel very happy and great. I see a lot of rabbits and frogs in the water. I love gardening with Lee because it is very fun.

***“When I’m at the garden I feel like a real gardener when I’m with Lee because he lets me plant garlic. Because the closest I’ve come to gardening is playing Grow A Garden. When I’m at the gardening, I see pond skaters in the tiny pond Lee owns. I love going down there. I really want to see a dragonfly but every time I try find one the just disappear.”***

**- Lexie, 4th class, Ladyswell NS**

***“When I’m at the garden I feel the soil and I see plants and I also heard plants moving. I love gardening with Lee because it’s fun.”***

**- Bryan, 4th class, Ladyswell NS**

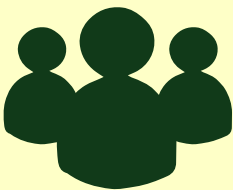


# Public Workshops & Events

In addition to our regular community volunteers, public workshops are a cornerstone of the GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden. Our workshops provide opportunities for new visitors to discover the garden, learn practical sustainability skills and experience the community spirit that makes the garden unique.

While weekly volunteering sessions and school visits ensure consistent engagement with regular participants, these workshops serve as a bridge to the wider community, opening the garden to those who may never have stepped onto the university campus before.

In 2025, the workshops attracted a total of 141 participants. Notably, many attendees were first-time visitors to the garden, illustrating the workshops' effectiveness in bringing new people into the community. For some, this initial engagement led to continued volunteering or participation in other garden activities, showing how public workshops function as a key gateway to long-term involvement.



## **Workshops in 2025 included topics such as:**

- The Art of Raised Bed Gardening;
- Composting techniques (“Compost Like a Pro”);
- Growing Potatoes in Containers;
- Early Potato and Onion Harvesting;
- Seasonal celebrations (Halloween; Yoga with Sheryl).

Each workshop provided participants with skills that they could take home, helping them adopt sustainable practices in their own gardens or homes. All workshops also included interactive components such as planting, sowing and harvesting, reinforcing learning through doing and reflecting the core educational ethos of the garden.

The public workshops also play a crucial role in raising the profile of the GLAS garden, attracting media attention and highlighting the value of partnerships with Fingal County Council, TU Dublin and project sponsors. Each workshop contributes to the garden's visibility, demonstrating how collaborative, community-led initiatives can support sustainable living, climate awareness and social inclusion.

Workshops are free of charge, and are scheduled and promoted through Eventbrite, social media and local community networks, ensuring that as many residents as possible have the opportunity to participate. This approach aligns with the programme's broader goal of deepening engagement while remaining open and accessible to newcomers, creating a healthy pipeline of volunteers and community supporters.



# Media Coverage

The GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden continued to attract good media interest throughout 2025. Coverage appeared across national newspapers, specialist horticulture publications and local radio, demonstrating that the garden is a valued community resource. In addition, both GAP and TU Dublin published a series of articles and updates on their own websites.

- **National print coverage** included letters and opinion pieces in *The Irish Independent*, *Irish Examiner* and *The Irish Times*, discussing the importance of community gardens, growing your own food and promoting sustainable living practices.
- **Specialist horticulture and environmental media** featured articles in *Horticulture Connected*, *RHSI Magazine* and *Garden Guide*, showcasing practical gardening initiatives, biodiversity projects and educational workshops.
- **Radio features** on Phoenix FM and Midlands 103 highlighted the social horticulture aspect of the project, community involvement and opportunities for volunteering, further increasing visibility among local audiences.

Media attention plays a key role in attracting new visitors, schools and community groups to the garden. Coverage of workshops, school programmes and biodiversity initiatives helps the public see that the garden is inclusive, welcoming and open to all of Dublin 15. It also reinforces the educational mission of the garden, demonstrating that “sustainability” can be practical and enjoyable.

Moreover, media exposure provides tangible recognition for the support of Fingal County Council, TU Dublin and corporate sponsors. Their contribution is highlighted in stories, reinforcing the value of public-private partnerships and encouraging continued investment in the programme.

# Challenges Identified in 2025

## 1. Limits to our operational capacity



Growing demand from schools, community groups and corporate partners continues to exceed the available staff time. Outreach efforts had to be scaled back to maintain programme quality.

## 2. Transport and accessibility



Communities in Mulhuddart, Tyrrelstown and Corduff - areas with high social and economic disadvantage - face limited public transport links to the campus. AstraZeneca's support enabled transport for school groups, but longer-term solutions are needed.

## 3. Site maintenance and security



Minor thefts and recurring fence damage increased maintenance needs. Kingston's sponsorship allowed for the addition of a new lean-to, improving shelter for participants.

## 4. Financial sustainability



The garden's annual operational costs are covered through a patchwork of public funding and corporate support. Long-term sustainability requires expanded investment, particularly to increase staff hours.

Despite these challenges, the garden continues to deliver strong social and environmental outcomes for the people of Dublin 15, improving mental health, reducing isolation, promoting sustainable living and bringing diverse communities together.

# Programme Deliverables: 2025 Performance

These deliverables are defined and agreed with Fingal County Council through the Service Level Agreement (SLA), ensuring clear accountability, consistent reporting and alignment with the Council's strategic objectives for community engagement and sustainability.

## Outputs Achieved 2025

- Inclusion of community groups and organisations in the Dublin 15 area supported; **18 organisations** engaged in 2025 (activity deliberately scaled down).
- **Community Advisory Group meetings** held in February and October.
- **Oversight Committee established and managed**, including Fingal County Council, TU Dublin and Global Action Plan. Partner meetings took place in February, July and November.
- **Monthly activity calendar** collated and circulated to stakeholders, community & voluntary groups, and accommodation centres to showcase volunteering opportunities.
- **Volunteer database** maintained, including expressions of interest, regular volunteers and corporate volunteer groups in Fingal. WhatsApp group of 59 regular volunteers established.

## Voices From The Garden

The GLAS @ TU Dublin community garden has a transformative impact on participants, as captured through videos and written testimonials. Volunteers consistently highlight benefits for mental health and wellbeing, describing the garden as a place to “totally unwind” and escape everyday pressures.

It is also a vital space for social connection, where people from diverse backgrounds meet, make friends, and learn from one another. Participants gain practical gardening and sustainability skills, including planting, composting, and caring for biodiversity, while schoolchildren engage with environmental learning in a hands-on, fun way. The garden also provides access to fresh produce and outdoor activity, combining physical, mental and educational benefits in one welcoming space.



Testimonials underscore the garden’s inclusive and supportive community. Volunteers describe it as “like a family meeting, and so much love and respect from people,” and praise the leadership of garden manager Lee Geoghegan for creating a safe, inspiring environment. Corporate groups and returning volunteers note the value of the garden for learning, teamwork and sustainability awareness, while families and school groups highlight its importance as a safe, engaging space for children and adults alike.

Together, these voices demonstrate that the garden is a hub for community, learning and personal growth, where everyone in Dublin 15 can contribute, connect and thrive.



***“Since coming to the garden I've noticed my mental health has improved a lot and my humour. I just love coming up to the garden.”***

- Garden volunteer

***“I really really love coming to the GLAS garden; it's like a family meeting, and so much love and respect from people.”***

- A volunteer

***(In the garden I learned) “how to plant several plants, to remove weeds from the fields where those plants are being planted, to prevent the weeds from damaging them. I learned the ability to come together and work as a team to increase productivity and to be connected to society. I learned that it's good to plant and at the same time nurture the plants to grow, in order for the plants to bear fruits which are being consumed by humanity.”***

- A volunteer

***“Life can be difficult for families who have children and adults with various needs and Lee gives so much of his time and knowledge to these groups. I have spoken to some of those parents and they are always praising Lee and how their children can't wait for the next visit to the gardens. They can relax knowing their children are in a safe and beautiful environment, created by GAP. You are making a massive difference to many people's lives.”***

- Bernadette Lynch

***“We attended GLAS for our corporate volunteering event. Amazing experience, Lee is so knowledgeable, kind, funny and grateful. Everyone left feeling really pleased. This was our second year returning, and I would highly recommend returning to see the impact of your work one year later. We were delighted to see the progress of the garden.”***

- Caroline Doyle, Dept Agency

***“I had a great experience with GLAS Garden. If there’s one lesson I’ll carry with me, it’s to never waste food; so many hands work hard to bring it to my table.”***

- Deva Kumar Anandan, TNEI Ireland

***“I really enjoyed the volunteering experience at the GLAS garden. Thanks to Lee's passionate explanations I learnt a lot about the importance (but also of the difficulties) of running such a project, especially in a part of Dublin in which the existence of this safe space is pivotal. The activities that the volunteers of the garden suggested for us to do were very basic and easy-to-learn (so that no previous experience is required), but at the same time very engaging and useful. In my case, I helped remove some weeds from the soil and painted some recycled wooden material that will later be turned into a table to use for children in occasion of projects with schools. I especially appreciated the latter, since it also gave me an insight about how these projects can help to raise awareness about themes like sustainability and climate change among new generations.”***

- Eugenia Marabini, Accenture.

***“It has been a pleasure spending time at the community garden as part of Rory’s TY Community Outreach. We have both enjoyed our time there. What has really made it special has been Lee and his wonderful ability to make every volunteer feel so welcome and wanted. Rory and I have both said that Lee is the reason we will come back to the garden even after his TY time is over. He made us feel part of things, explained and educated us on each visit and is full of positivity. He listens to everyone and embraces suggestions. He is a wonderful ambassador for GAP and the community garden in particular. We can’t wait to see what happens in the space through 2024.”***

- Caitriona O’Sullivan



# Project Oversight

Project management is delivered by Global Action Plan, involving:

- Lee Geoghegan, Community Garden Manager;
- Emer Savage, Education Programme Coordinator;
- Hans Zomer, CEO.

Oversight is provided through:

- Project Partner Meetings (Fingal County Council, GAP, TU Dublin): February, July and November;
- Community Advisory Group Meetings: February and October

# Conclusion

GAP Ireland's journey with TU Dublin and Fingal County Council through the GLAS @ TU Dublin garden stands as living proof that small seeds of action can blossom into powerful roots of community, sustainability and hope.

What began as a half-acre patch of underutilised land has, in just a few years, transformed into a vibrant, welcoming hub and a place where ecology, social inclusion, learning and connection merge.



**The garden embodies a simple but profound belief: that access to nature, hands-on learning and a welcoming community should be available to everyone, irrespective of age, background or ability.**

In the GLAS garden everyone is welcome. Whether it's local schoolchildren discovering where their food really comes from, adults with disabilities finding companionship and purpose, corporate volunteers reconnecting with community, or TU Dublin students exploring sustainability in practice. This commitment to social inclusion, wellbeing and environmental stewardship lies at the heart of GLAS.

The garden is a place to grow vegetables but also a hands-on classroom for organic gardening, composting, biodiversity, water management and regenerative practices. In the GLAS community garden abstract ideas of sustainability are turned into lived experiences. Visitors and volunteers learn not only how to sow and harvest, but how to nurture soil, foster biodiversity, reduce waste and care for the planet. In doing so, GLAS contributes to broader environmental goals while grounding climate action in everyday community life.

**The garden offers a rare kind of space: calm, green and shared. It gives people a sense of purpose, a sense of belonging and a sense of shared ownership.**



Through teamwork, laughter, learning and harvest, people build relationships, confidence and pride. As one supporter aptly put it, **“we nurture nature, and harvest hope.”**

The success of GLAS @ TU Dublin draws on the well-established template developed by GAP’s earlier garden in Ballymun, proving that this model works from a social, environmental and educational perspective.

**The Blanchardstown garden now serves as a blueprint for what community gardens could be: accessible, inclusive, educational and deeply connected to local realities. It stands as evidence that grassroots projects can deliver measurable, positive change.**



As we reflect on 2025 with pride and gratitude, we also recognise the challenges ahead — growing demand, capacity constraints, need for sustainable funding and greater accessibility for disadvantaged communities. What we also see, however, is the enormous potential: for deeper engagement, wider reach, expanded learning and stronger community bonds.

Future plans centre on consolidating the strong partnerships already in place, and creating new opportunities for learning, participation and biodiversity enhancement.

The project hopes to strengthen links with community organisations in the Dublin 15 area, and explore additional infrastructure that supports climate action and nature-based learning. Ensuring long-term financial and operational sustainability will be essential to meeting increasing demand and maintaining the garden as an accessible and well-used public asset.

With continued support from public bodies, donors, corporate partners and community leaders, the GLAS garden can grow far beyond its physical boundaries. It can continue to sow seeds not only in soil, but in lives, attitudes and the future of our communities.



## **GLOBAL ACTION PLAN IRELAND**

GLAS @ TU Dublin is delivered through a partnership between GAP Ireland, TU Dublin, and Fingal County Council.

Published: January 2026

Design by Emma Mitchell

Published by GAP Ireland: [www.globalactionplan.ie](http://www.globalactionplan.ie)